DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 268 609 CS 505 266

TITLE Business and Organizational Communication: Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations Published in "Dissertation Abstracts International," July through December 1985 (Vol. 46 Nos. 1 through 6).

INSTITUTION ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Urbana, Ill.

PUB DATE 85

NOTE 10p.; Pages may be marginally legible.

PUB TYPE Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS Administrator Role; Annotated Bibliographies; Business; *Business Correspondence; Business English; *Communication Research; *Doctoral Dissertations; Elementary Secondary Education; *Employer Employee Relationship; Feedback; Foreign Countries; Foreign Workers; Higher Education; *Organizational Communication; *Research Methodology

IDENTIFIERS Canada

ABSTRACT

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 13 titles deal with the following topics: (1) speaker turns between staff and foreign clients at an employment agency; (2) the communication of norms in an effective organization; (3) industrial strategies and the communication/information sector in Canada; (4) the characteristics of effective written business communication; (5) ideology and power in organizations; (6) communication structure, network roles, and interpersonal orientations of staff members in a middle school setting; (7) the changing image of the Chrysler Corporation in 1979-80; (8) a communication based model for interpreting organizational culture; (9) downward, task-relevant, confidential information disclosure between superiors and subordinates; (10) instructional and support staffs' perceptions of internal communication in a suburban school district; (11) identification in the United States Forest Service; (12) a model of continuous evaluation and feedback in the classroom; and (13) the effect of introducing remedial English usage instruction in collegiate business communication. (FL)

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Abstracts of the following dissertations are included in this collection:

Bookman, Karen
A MICROANALYSIS OF SPEAKER TURNS BETWEEN STAFF AND FOREIGN CLIENTS AT AN EMPLOYMENT AGENCY

Bullis, Connie A.
COMMUNICATION AS UNOBTRUSIVE CONTROL: A RE-EXAMINATION OF IDENTIFICATION IN THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Cobbett, Allen A.
THE COMMUNICATION OF NORMS IN AN EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION: A CASE STUDY

Drews, Sue Ann
A STUDY OF INSTRUCTIONAL AND SUPPORT STAFFS' PERCEPTIONS OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN A SUBURBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Fanelli, Russell
CONTINUOUS EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK: A MODEL FOR SHARING COMMUNICATION IN THE CLASSROOM

Mansell, Robin E.
INDUSTRIAL STRATEGIES AND THE COMMUNICATION/INFORMATION SECTOR: AN ANALYSIS OF CONTRADICTIONS IN CANADIAN POLICY AND PERFORMANCE

Mullins, Robbie A. Story
A STUDY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE WRITTEN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Mumby, Dennis Keith
IDEOLOGY AND POWER IN ORGANIZATIONS: A RADICAL THEORY OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES

Rohland, Grace J.
COMMUNICATION STRUCTURE, NETWORK ROLES AND INTERPERSONAL ORIENTATIONS OF STAFF MEMBERS IN A MIDDLE SCHOOL SETTING

Samra, Rise Jane
THE CHANGING IMAGE OF THE CHRYSLER CORPORATION (1979-1980): A DRAMATISTIC ANALYSIS

Shuherk, Carol Charlotte
INTERPRETING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: A COMMUNICATION BASED MODEL

Steerey, Lorraine Machina
A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE AFFECT OF INTRODUCING REMEDIAL ENGLISH USAGE INSTRUCTION IN COLLEGIATE BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

Wanguri, Deloris McGee
A STUDY OF DOWNWARD TASK-
RELEVANT CONFIDENTIAL
INFORMATION DISCLOSURE
BETWEEN SUPERIORS AND
SUBORDINATES

A MICROANALYSIS OF SPEAKER TURNS BETWEEN STAFF AND FOREIGN CLIENTS AT AN EMPLOYMENT AGENCY

Order No. DA8513189

BOOKMAN, KAREN, PH.D. *The University of Texas at Austin*, 1984. 196pp. Supervisor: John G. Bordie

This study focuses on how the speaker turns of oral discourse unfold as the American staff of a refugee employment agency and their foreign clients interact. The contribution of this study is a framework which explicates how interactive ties are developed by means of the linguistic signal. The framework, *backward and forward looking*, makes explicit the relationship between what one speaker says vis-a-vis his interlocutor's previous and anticipated turns. Elements of an utterance such as literal semantic content, marked intonation and repetition can *look back* to the interlocutor's literal previous utterance, implications, communicative obstacles presented by that utterance, or to extralinguistic phenomena such as client attitude. Elements of an utterance can *look forward* to the same.

This framework was developed in part to account for the two staff members' different interactive styles. As Valorie and Carl interviewed their clients, each had to deal with linguistic and cultural obstacles. The data consist of taped and handwritten interviews collected during a three-month period. Associates who saw the transcripts agreed on the following impressionistic labels: Carl was abrupt, impatient and impersonal, while Valorie was more flowing, patient and interactive. Counting such discourse phenomena as pauses, frequency of repair strategies and topic changes did not reveal why Valorie and Carl created such different impressions. However, characteristic patterns of looking did emerge from the data. They are: (1) When Valorie looks forward within one turn, she tends to simultaneously look back. Carl tends to only look forward. (2) Within one turn, Valorie tends to look forward fewer times and look back more times than Carl. (3) During communicative trouble, Valorie tends to look back at the literal semantic content, but Carl tends to look back at extralinguistic phenomena such as the client's degree of cooperativeness.

To conclude the study, the framework is compared to Brown and Levinson's analysis of politeness, and Labov and Fanshel's microanalysis of psychoanalytic discourse. Finally, applications to the layperson are touched on; the backward and forward looking framework can be used to improve communication between different cultural and linguistic groups in public settings such as management-union negotiating sessions and inter-religious meetings.

COMMUNICATION AS UNOBTRUSIVE CONTROL: A RE-EXAMINATION OF IDENTIFICATION IN THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Order No. DA8507662

BULLIS, CONNIE A., PH.D. *Purdue University*, 1984. 166pp. Major Professor: Phillip K. Tompkins

The control role of organizational communication has been de-emphasized until recently when a theory of organizational communication as unobtrusive control was developed. The theory holds that through communication, the leaders of organizations are able to conscript the identification of members. Without full awareness, organizational members become strongly identified with organizations such that they make decisions with the interests of the organization foremost in mind. They may essentially share their identities with their organizations. The communication patterns which serve to accomplish this end, the participants' perspectives of the process and the outcome, the sense of identification, were explored in this study.

The U.S. Forest Service provided the ideal context for the study because many writers had previously cited this organization. The descriptions generated by these scholars indicated that the communication within the U.S. Forest Service was historically a near ideal type of control communication. This study sought to compare the present communication system to that described by past researchers.

A multimethod approach was employed in exploring these interests. Employees' perceptions or the process and their resulting decision making premises were tapped in personal interviews. Survey questionnaires provided a further index of perceptions. Two scales which measured degree of identification were included in the questionnaire. Interaction among employees was observed during meetings.

The results of the study indicated that the theory is valuable in illuminating the relationship between individuals and organizations. Foresters were found to identify more than nonforesters. Tenure and hierarchical position had strong effects on degree of identification. Many of the communication patterns such as frequent transfers, use of symbols, isolated offices, external messages, selection procedures producing homogeneity of membership and indoctrination sessions associated with strong identification, were not as heavily used presently as they had been in the past. The degree of identification had also decreased. More obtrusive control practices had increased.

THE COMMUNICATION OF NORMS IN AN EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATION: A CASE STUDY

Order No. DA8514973

COBBETT, ALLEN A., PH.D. *University of Pittsburgh*, 1984. 244pp.

This dissertation investigated two questions: "what are the norms of an effective organization?" and "how are these norms communicated to organizational members?" The fields of organizational communication, effectiveness and group dynamics were reviewed and synthesized to provide a unified conceptual approach.

The criteria of Production, Efficiency, Satisfaction and Adaptability were utilized to measure effectiveness. These criteria were also used as categories to classify normative behavior. The site of the study was a wholesale manufacturer.

The methodology drew on a network analysis of the sociometric structure of the organization. Once liaisons and work group members were identified, interviews were conducted. All levels of the organization's formal structure were included.

The results of the study supported the use of multiple criteria when approaching the issue of effectiveness. Also, the importance of behavioral control as a function of group monitoring supported by liaison contact was discovered. Specific norms governing the goal directed behavior of members were discovered and described.

A STUDY OF INSTRUCTIONAL AND SUPPORT STAFFS' PERCEPTIONS OF INTERNAL COMMUNICATION IN A SUBURBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

Order No. DA8518202

DREWS, SUE ANN, ED.D. *Indiana University*, 1985. 193pp. Chairman: Dean F. Berkeley

The 1983 national reports brought educational systems into sharp focus by the government, media and citizenry. School systems have become aware of the impact that their employees have upon the public's perceptions of the schools. Effective internal communication becomes a prerequisite to good external communications. The purpose of the study was to assess the perceived effectiveness of the internal communication process by the school employees. A survey instrument was designed and sent to 30% of the instructional, support and administrative staffs. The respondents were asked to rate the use and adequacy of various oral and written communication devices. Questions were posed to determine the extent of two-way communication, perceotions of administrative efforts to keep employees informed of board policies, the desire for information on state and national educational issues and the extent of informal communication use. Interviews were conducted with selected representatives to glean additional information.

An analysis of the data revealed the following major findings. (1) The oral communication devices used half the time or more to gain school district information were: observation/evaluation discussions, building intercom announcements, informal conversations and job related meetings. (2) The written devices used to obtain school news were: a district communique, letters from the principal, three external publications and the local newspapers. (3) The employees indicated that two-way communication occurred slightly less than half the time. (4) Employees were informed of board policies less than half the time. (5) Employees desired educational news beyond the school district less than half the time.

Some major conclusions of the study were: (1) The most widely accepted devices to obtain school news were the internal communique, job-related meetings and informal conversations. (2) The most highly valued oral device was the observation/evaluation discussions. (3) The most highly valued written device was the internal communique.

CONTINUOUS EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK: A MODEL FOR SHARING COMMUNICATION IN THE CLASSROOM

Order No. DA8509650

FANELLI, RUSSELL, PH.D. *Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute*, 1984. 205pp. Adviser: S. Michael Halloran

This dissertation on continuous student evaluation of faculty performance reports on the results of several instructors who ask students at the end of class each week to rate the faculty member on such items as effectiveness of group discussion, opportunity for participation, perceived value of material covered, quality of instruction, and interest in the proceedings. After students have completed their ratings, they are provided with a space for writing comments on any matter concerning the course. They are asked not to sign their evaluations. The instructor summarizes the ratings and lists each student's comment by number after editing it for grammar, punctuation and spelling. Copies are reproduced and distributed to each member of the class and an appropriate amount of time is set aside to discuss any items which the participants feel deserve attention.

This study illustrates the value of continuous student evaluation and feedback of the results in providing the instructor with valuable data concerning the following partial list of concerns: (1) The effects of assumptions and expectations. (2) Types of interaction among participants. (3) Various communication practices and their consequences. (4) How learning takes place in groups. (5) Problems related to instruction. (6) Problems related to appraisal. (7) The process of freely sharing information in a cooperative rather than a competitive environment. (8) Difficulties in establishing and maintaining an environment in which personal freedom not only survives, but grows.

In this dissertation the primary responsibility for correcting identified problems rests with the instructor, yet students are encouraged to join in the problem solving process. Through the cooperative behavior of the participants in diagnosing and solving current organizational and instructional problems, the organization remains alive, vital, and growing. Growth refers not only to the individual student's increase in knowledge and skills, but also to his growth in maturity as a manager who is willing to work to achieve the greatest good for the class organization. Problems with instituting and maintaining a continuous evaluation and feedback system are discussed and data from an analysis of ratings and comments is reviewed.

INDUSTRIAL STRATEGIES AND THE COMMUNICATION/INFORMATION SECTOR: AN ANALYSIS OF CONTRADICTIONS IN CANADIAN POLICY AND PERFORMANCE

MANSELL, ROBIN E., PH.D. *Simon Fraser University (Canada)*, 1984. Supervisor: William H. Melody

The communication/information sector has commanded the attention of Canadian policy-makers as a critical component of industrial policy. Canadian government plans for the rapid introduction of new products and services have attracted the attention of both highly industrialized and developing nations. The communication/information sector has been selected as a vehicle for building Canadian sovereignty in the high-technology sector and strengthening the economy with production for export. Yet, experience shows a contradictory situation of increasing net imports and foreign penetration of Canadian markets.

This thesis examines economic and political incentives in the public and private sector that have affected the development of Canadian products and services. It shows how institutional and structural factors that generally have received little attention condition the effectiveness of government intervention in the communication/information sector.

Case studies of industrial performance are developed that show discrepancies between policy objectives and the market incentives of firms in the space, telecommunication and computer communication sectors. A study of policy and planning in the space sector shows that research has promoted new technologies but neither self-sufficiency nor efficiency. The implications of trends toward monopolistic domestic market structures, concentration of control over economic resource allocation, and discriminatory access to new communication/information systems are investigated. The thesis critically examines widely accepted theories of the communication/information sector's role in the economic development process that provide the justification for export 'strategies' and research and development subsidies.

The thesis concludes that the success of a few major Canadian firms in export markets has contributed to a continuing reluctance to address structural issues related to monopoly and concentration in the domestic market. Government policies often have had the opposite of their intended effects. Domestic communication distribution systems, services, and software are being subsumed within international markets resulting in a deepening of economic, political and cultural dependency relations.

Promotional policies are contrasted with alternatives that would seek to accentuate economic and technical differences between Canadian and global communication/information systems. Approaches to policy are recommended that would stem the further weakening of domestic control over the communication/information sector.

A STUDY OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE WRITTEN BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Order No. DA8515298

MULLINS, ROBBIE A. STORY, ED.D. *Oklahoma State University*, 1984. 127pp. Adviser: Zane K. Quible

Scope of Study. The purpose of this research was to provide information that will aid letter writers in improving the effectiveness of their written business communication. The study was designed to identify and prioritize the characteristics of effective written business communication. The research design and procedure proposed to: (1) generate characteristics of effective written business communication, (2) rate the importance of the characteristics generated and (3) establish a rank order of characteristics in terms of their importance. This was accomplished through a research process using the Delphi Technique. A panel of experts, selected randomly from the 1982 American Business Communication Association participated in the study. The hypothesis used in the study was tested by the Chi-square test of significance and the Kendall's Tau and measured at the 90 percent confidence level.

Findings and Conclusions. A significant difference of opinion in relation to the responses given in Round two and Round three of the Delphi Technique was found for nine of the 20 characteristics that were rated important to effective written business communication. The study revealed that the characteristics identified in the higher ratings in Round two continued to rank high in Round three. A group consensus was reached identifying and prioritizing the top ten characteristics of effective written business communication. The conclusion can be drawn that even though there are numerous characteristics cited as being important to effective written business communication, some characteristics are of greater importance than others.

IDEOLOGY AND POWER IN ORGANIZATIONS: A RADICAL THEORY OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES

Order No. DA8510047

MUMBY, DENNIS KEITH, PH.D. *Southern Illinois University at Carbondale*, 1984. 221pp. Major Professor: Stanley A. Deetz

Extant theories of organizational culture have provided considerable insight into processes of sense-making and meaning formation in organizations. Little research has been conducted, however, which examines the conditions under which organizational meaning arises. This dissertation attempts to overcome this problem by examining the role of power and ideology in structuring organizational practices. It is argued that meaning does not arise spontaneously and consensually, but is rather the product of vested interests that control the way in which organizational reality is perceived.

The vested interests of particular groups in organizations are produced, maintained, and reproduced by ideological meaning formations within the organization. Ideology functions by constituting the organizational consciousness of social actors. This work examines organizational ideology by looking at the way it is manifested in organizational symbolism. It is argued that discursive practices in organizations are not merely a source of information, but largely determine the way in which members perceive and experience their organization. Organizational language is thus viewed not only as the principal medium of organizational experience, but also as the means by which a systematic distortion of an organization's culture can arise through the privileging of certain interests.

To conclude, the epistemological and methodological implications of this reconceptualization of "organizational culture" are considered.

COMMUNICATION STRUCTURE, NETWORK ROLES AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS ORIENTATIONS OF STAFF MEMBERS IN A MIDDLE SCHOOL SETTING

Order No. DA8517656

ROHLAND, GRACE J., ED.D. *The University of Utah*, 1985. 160pp. Chairman: Lloyd E. McCleary

Network analysis procedures identified school communication structure and the roles of bridge, liaison, key group communicator and isolate. Readministration of the original communication survey revealed that patterns of interactions among members were stable from one school year to the next. A loosely coupled, open, and flat school structure allowed equal opportunity for informal channel use to all members. Low saturation measures indicated that although channel availability existed, actual use was moderate to low.

Communication roles varied across nets according to the type of information needed. Roles were not assigned nor did formal position status dictate the communication roles.

Propinquity and teaching specialty were the variables that most affected communication choices and emergent group patterns.

Interpersonal needs for inclusion, affection, and control were examined as factors that predisposed members towards specific roles of liaison, bridge, key or isolate. Inclusion and affection needs were present for all groups, and bridge members scored higher than others in these areas. Inclusion and affection needs are reflective of bridge contact choices, which include both group links and out-of-group-links. The influence potential for this role was noted.

Although isolate positions existed, these individuals did not feel disconnected from the system. They communicated on a situational basis and preferred less commitment to groups and group processes. The potential for low tenured members and for appendages to become isolates emphasized the necessity for schools to create a working environment where interpersonal needs can be acknowledged through the removal of communication barriers.

As a methodology network analysis is a viable and valuable tool for visualizing the school's informal communication structure. In combination with qualitative techniques (such as interviews and observations), relational processes can be interpreted and influencing contextual elements defined.

THE CHANGING IMAGE OF THE CHRYSLER CORPORATION (1979-1980): A DRAMATISTIC ANALYSIS

Order No. DA8515183

SAMRA, RISE JANE, PH.D. *The University of Arizona*, 1985. 170pp. Directors: Andrew A. King, Henry L. Ewbank

The economic analysts on Wall Street had all but signed Chrysler's death certificate when Lee Iacocca took the reins of a floundering corporate giant in 1979. At this writing (1985) Chrysler's $1.2 billion in government backed loans has been paid back seven years ahead of schedule and the company has reported profits well over $550 million. During Chrysler's recovery, a large public relations and advertising campaign was launched to promote Chrysler's new products and to present consumers with a more positive image of the company. This study was undertaken for two purposes. The first was to examine the changes in the presentation and content of Chrysler's image during the campaign. The second was to undertake a Burkean analysis of the persuasive messages of the campaign in order to assess their motivational structure, ideological perspective and potential effectiveness.

How did the image of the Chrysler Corporation change from the time of the federally approved loan in 1979 to its repayment of loans in 1983? To answer the question, this writer employed a method of Burkean analysis to assess the rhetorical values of the Chrysler-paid media campaign. Uncontrolled media coverage was also examined, since it constituted a significant part of the rhetorical situation to which the paid media campaign had to respond.

The results were a profile of Chrysler's attempts to gain identification with its constituents. What was the motivational and ideological thrust of the appeals? It was discovered that prior to the federal loan guarantee, Chrysler utilized scenic arguments claiming its own victimage. High energy costs, Japanese imports, runaway inflation, and government regulations were cited as factors contributing to its financial difficulties. After Chrysler successfully repaid its loan, its message was changed to emphasize the Agent: We the New Chrysler Corporation have great leadership and competence and these are the ingredients that led to our success. Chrysler's financial success provided the basis for changing its image from that of a failure to that of a hero.

INTERPRETING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: A COMMUNICATION BASED MODEL Order No. DA8507073

SHUMERK, CAROL CHARLOTTE, PH.D. *University of Oregon*, 1984. 258pp. Adviser: Susan R. Glaser

The study of organizations from a cultural perspective has emerged in the fields of organizational theory and communication in recent years. This perspective views organizations as miniature societies whose members enact a cultural frame of reference within which they understand and interpret their on-going organizational life.

This study used multiple measures: interview, observation, and survey to piece together a picture of the overall culture of a small city government; a service conglomerate providing fire, police, fiscal, utility, library and development services to a Pacific Northwest community.

An interpretive model based on key communication activities and their meanings for organization members was employed in an effort to find replicable procedures for conducting communication research in organizational culture. Input variables were clustered within the "forms" of ritual, ceremony, specialized vocabulary, stories, example, proscriptions and physical setting and explored in an effort to discover the output variables clustered under "content" categories: beliefs, values, behavior.

The findings indicated that organizational cultures exist, apart from deliberate efforts to construct them, are multi-cultural in form, comprised of both sub and counter cultures, and that change in organizational life, for example in leadership, triggers substantial cultural change that arises simultaneously from different levels, in both planned and unplanned fashion.

A STUDY TO DETERMINE THE AFFECT OF INTRODUCING REMEDIAL ENGLISH USAGE INSTRUCTION IN COLLEGIATE BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS Order No. DA8512091

STEEREY, LORRAINE MACHINA, ED.D. *Montana State University*, 1984. 199pp. Chairperson: Eric Strohmeyer

The principal problem of this study was to compare student achievement in business letter writing and traditional coursework in business communications courses following an outline excluding remedial English usage instruction with student achievement in business communications courses following an outline including remedial English usage instruction.

The second problem of this study was to compare the reliability of holistic grading with analytical grading when used to evaluate student achievement in business letter writing.

This study was conducted Winter Quarter 1983 at Montana State University and Eastern Montana College.

Students were given Barton's Language Skills Test for college students in business communications as a pretest. The pretest also included the writing of two business letters.

Control groups received no formal instruction in remedial English fundamentals. The experimental group received instruction in remedial English fundamentals. The experimental group received instruction in remedial English fundamentals by the lecture-discussion method.

After both groups completed the business letter writing unit, they took the postinstructional tests. These tests consisted of Barton's Language Skills test and the writing of two business letters.

The reliability of holistic and analytical grading was compared. Sample letters were scored by the holistic grading method by trained readers. Then these letters were scored analytically by the same trained readers. The reliability of these methods was determined by using Kuder-Richardson's formula.

Two-way analysis of variance was used to statistically compare student achievement of the groups which received remedial English usage instruction with those students who did not receive this instruction.

The findings of this study indicate that formal instruction in remedial English usage does not significantly affect a student's ability to write a business letter. However, this instruction does significantly increase student formal knowledge of English usage.

The findings of this study also support the use of holistic grading for the judging of student achievement in business letter writing.

A STUDY OF DOWNWARD TASK-RELEVANT CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE BETWEEN SUPERIORS AND SUBORDINATES Order No. DA8513319

WANGURI, DELORIS MCGEE, PH.D. *The University of Texas at Austin*, 1984. 141pp. Supervisor: Lear Ashmore

This investigation was a field study analyzing conditions under which managers are most likely to disclose task-relevant confidential information to their subordinates, and the extent to which first-level and middle-level managers differ in their disclosures. Further, the research assessed the extent to which managers differ, based on sex.

The study involved 145 first and middle level managers from 19 different state agencies in Texas. The 94 participants in the first phase were administered a paper-and-pencil questionnaire which investigated types of confidential job-related information; target persons, media, reasons, and settings for such information sharing; number of participants in these encounters; frequencies with which such disclosures occur; the extent to which such encounters are planned; and the extent to which managers regret having given confidential task-relevant information. In addition, this instrument involved the ordering of confidential information according to which types the managers are most and least likely to share, and the ordering of reasons according to which the managers perceive are most and least common reasons for giving such information. The 51 participants in the second phase were administered a paper-and-pencil questionnaire, based on responses from managers during the first phase.

Analysis of the data indicated managers are most likely to forecast information regarding structural changes within the organization. On the other hand, they are least likely to discuss peer-related information. Although considerable variance was observed in the actual reasons cited for such disclosures, these disclosures are primarily designed to enhance superior-subordinate relations and occur within the office setting in private dyadic interactions involving the manager and subordinate. Responses regarding the extent to which such disclosures were planned and the extent to which they were regretted were dichotomous.

In addition, tests indicated no significant differences in the rankings of managers based on level or on sex, although the results did reflect trends toward the disclosure of "forecasting" information regarding candidates for promotion by males.

The over-all results of this research support the notion of communication openness, and advance the study, through a systematic qualitative and quantitative analysis, of task-relevant confidential information disclosure within the organizational setting.

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